

STAFF REPORT

DATE: April 7, 2022

TO: Governing Body

FROM: City Attorney

RE: Sign Code Review



Background: The intent of the Sign Code is to regulate and control all exterior signs placed for observation in order to preserve, protect and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of the City of Bel Aire. Further, it is intended to: encourage the reasonable, orderly and effective display of signs; enhance the physical appearance of the City; reduce visual clutter; prevent blighting influences and protect property values.

Here are the main complaints we get about signs in order of frequency:

- *Neighbors complaining about content or maintenance of a sign that a neighboring property owner has displayed.*
- *Residents complaining about signs cluttering intersections and making the city look run-down.*
- *Drivers/neighbors complaining about the brightness of a business sign along the road.*
- *Property owners complaining about having to pay to displaying a sign in their own front yard.*

The law has been very active regarding the regulation of signs. Localities must limit regulation of signs to **Time, Place, Manner** of display and not address content. This can be challenging as a person has to often read a sign to determine if it is in the right place and manner. Our code aims to limit regulation to location, sizes, and display time. There is some clean-up work that should be done to refine this effort even more. There are also some opportunities for Council to address some of the complaints without getting into specific content regulation of signs:

Discussion Points

- **Should code enforcement prioritize addressing dilapidated or poorly maintained signs in 2022?**
- **Should City consider allowing one temporary yard sign per year on any residential property for 30 days with a simple online permit application?**
- **Should Council re-evaluate sign illumination standards to reduce light pollution?**
- **Should Council re-evaluate the \$50 sign permit fee?**